



ODNI Releases Global Food Security Assessment

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The overall risk of food insecurity in many countries of strategic importance to the United States will increase during the next 10 years because of production, transport and market disruptions to local food availability, lower purchasing power and counterproductive government policies, according to an assessment released today by the U.S. intelligence community.

The inter-agency assessment, "Global Food Security," was prepared under the leadership of the National Intelligence Council's Strategic Futures Group within the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and drafted principally by the CIA.

The assessment also notes:

- Demographic shifts and constraints on key inputs, such as land and water, will probably compound the risk. In some countries, declining food security will almost certainly contribute to social disruptions and political instability.
- Simply growing more food globally will not lead to more food-secure countries because sustainable access will remain unequal; millions lack access to land or income sources to buy sufficient food.
- Augmenting traditional approaches to agricultural development with lesser-used strategies such as reducing crop and food waste, generating off-farm income activities, conducting research in minor crops and fostering technical education in agriculture would improve the resilience of local and global food systems. Such strategies can help Washington and its allies to develop creative complements to standard approaches and help resolve inherent tensions between goals such as producing more food and conserving water and other natural resources.
- The intelligence community conducted detailed unclassified research on food security issues in multiple countries and across six food-related commodities: wheat, rice, coarse grains, oil crops, sugar crops and fish.



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Assumptions:

- Principal demand factors that will affect food security in the long-term (beyond 2025) are demographic changes-to include urbanization-and income growth in emerging and developing countries. These trends will influence dietary preferences.
- The principal supply factors will be: weather, the rate of agricultural technology development and deployment, the availability of resources, and government policies.
- Agricultural markets, energy availability, agricultural technologies, and supporting infrastructure will not lead to dramatic, “discontinuous” changes in food supply or demand by 2025.

The timeframe for the key judgments is out to 2025, however, the assessment discusses longer-term trends that might affect U.S. national security interests.

Key Judgment A: We judge that the overall risk of food insecurity in many countries of strategic importance to the United States will increase during the next 10 years because of production, transport and market disruptions to local food availability, declining purchasing power and counterproductive government policies. Demographic shifts and constraints on key inputs will compound this risk. In some countries, declining food security will almost certainly contribute to social disruptions or large-scale political instability or conflict, amplifying global concerns about the availability of food.

Key Judgment B: Prospects are poor for countries grappling with food insecurity. The majority of countries already experiencing high-to-extreme food insecurity face risk factors that could worsen their food security through 2025; some countries that have low-to-moderate food insecurity today are at risk of experiencing worsening conditions during the next 10 years. The intersection of food insecurity with governance gaps will probably result in social disruption, political turmoil or conflict.

Key Judgment C: We judge that augmenting traditional approaches to agricultural development with innovative, but lesser-used strategies — such as reducing crop and food waste, generating off-farm income activities, conducting research into minor crops and fostering technical education in agriculture — will improve the resilience of local and global food systems. This combination will probably increase the ability of individuals to acquire food and reinforce U.S. developmental strategies more than either approach alone.

Key Judgment D: Developing creative complements to traditional approaches to improve global food security will take a worldwide effort. Opportunities exist for the United States — already viewed as a leader in promoting global food security — to align with long-standing allies as well



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as new partners. Some countries offer nontraditional models of how to resolve the inherent tension between goals such as producing more food and conserving water and other natural resources. Emerging economies with growing food security expertise can offer solutions more palatable to countries with low levels of development and technology. Food-insecure countries themselves will also be an important part of the effort; those taking complete or partial ownership of programs designed to build local food security are likely to see more sustainable results.

A full copy of the report can be found [here](#).

A copy of the selected emerging agriculture technologies matrix can be found [here](#).